(c) if so, the reasons for abandoning the above airport;

(d) whether there is any proposal to revive the airport and start its operations afresh;

(e) whether any request in this regard has been received from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the action taken by Government on the request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Cuddapah airport was not abandoned. It is a non-operational airport since no scheduled flight has operated at Cuddapah for more than 15 years.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested to make Cuddapah airport operational for low-cost airlines.

(g) On inspection, the upgradation of existing facilities at Cuddapah airport for operation of ATR-42 type of aircraft was found feasible. However, Airports Authority of India (AAI) has no plan, at present, to take up the development works because there is no demand from any scheduled airlines to operate through this airport.

Pending proposals for new airlines

2135. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are encouraging existing private airlines to expand their wings in Aviation sector;

(b) if not, the reasons for granting international slots to these airlines without waiting for Aviation Policy;

(c) whether Government would encourage other private domestic airlines and allow new players to enter the Aviation sector by giving the permission promptly;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the details of proposal for grant of permission to new airlines pending for more than six months; and

(f) the steps being taken to clear these proposals promptly by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) As part of its liberalization policy and to improve the utilisation of traffic rights by the Indian side, Government decided to permit private scheduled airlines having continuous 5 years operations in domestic sector and having a minimum fleet size of 20 aircraft to operate on international routes except to UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

(e) and (f) As per the eligibility condition only Jet Airways and Air Sahara qualify for international operations amongst the domestic private scheduled airlines at present. These airlines have already been permitted to operate on international routes.

Joint Venture between SIAEC and Indian Airlines

2136. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of bilateral agreements on Aviation sector between India and Singapore;

(b) whether Singapore International Airlines Engineering Company (SIAEC) have recently withdrawn from the Joint Venture (JV) with Indian Airlines on setting up of the Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility; and

(c) if so, the main reasons for withdrawal from the planed JV of MRO facility and whether it will hit the Indian Airlines in their growth programmes and if so, the steps being taken to revive the JV by Government at the highest level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The Air Services Agreement between India and Singapore was signed on 23rd January, 1968. Since then bilateral air services talks were held from time to time to review the air services matters by signing MOU/Agreed Minutes, the last round of which was held on 23-24 August, 2005. As per the present air services arrangement between two countries, the designated airlines of both sides are entitled